1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

527
417
291
415

MONASTERY FEAST

[facing p. 256]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

857

MIKMAR AND CHIMPET PLAYING

583
584
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342
417

MIKMAR GOES OFF WITH THE *ASÉK* GIFTS TO SEE HIS NEWLY AFFIANCED BRIDE, WHOM HE DOESN'T KNOW

He is wearing his best clothes. With him are on the left Gongyop's son, with the pig on his back, and Kurma's nephew Takshyom holding a lantern, and with the copper bowl on his back; on the right Chinya, Mikmar's "paternal uncle" (really his second cousin once removed) and Chala Mandal, who is *bek-bu*. The wife lives two days' journey away. On the fence are reeds which have been bent when green drying for thatch.

F 320

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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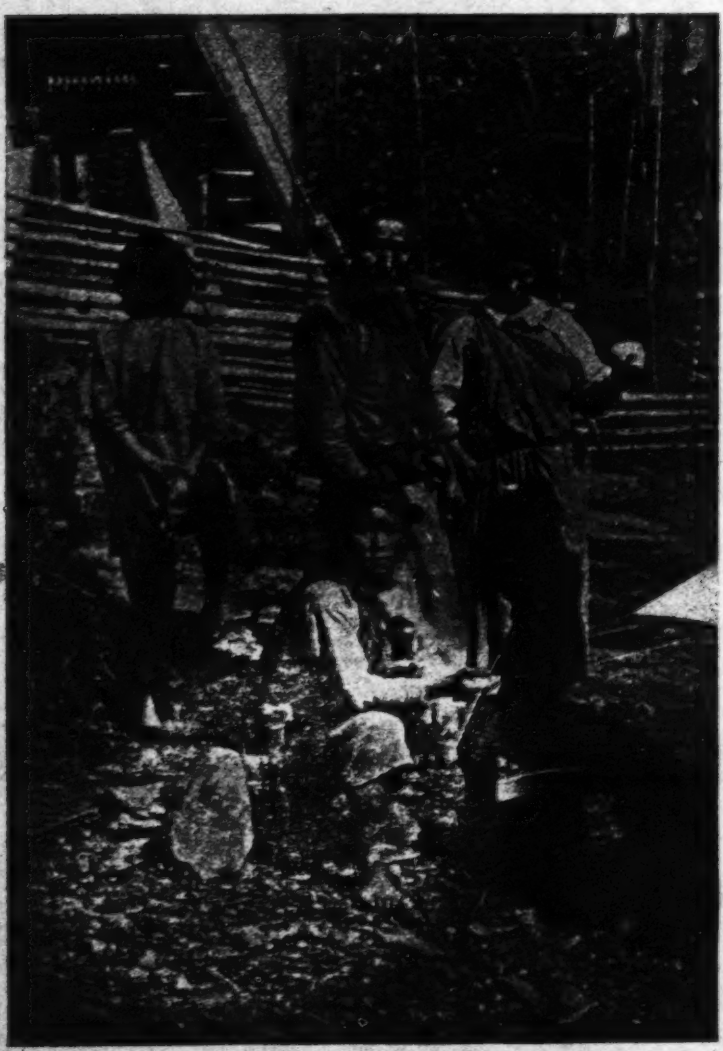

MR. AND MRS. JIROONG. MRS. JIROONG IS SPINNING. SHE IS WEARING TIBETAN DRESS AND HER HUSBAND'S HAT. SEATED IN FRONT IS DADOOL SOAKING A CUT FOOT. ATYOOK TURNS HIS BACK

[facing p. 424]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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GONGYOP DEDICATES MRS. CHANO TO THE MUN GOD

Above: Valuables and other objects on a 'plate' on an open-air altar.

Below: Gongyop offers to the gods and devils the cooked intestines of the sacrificial ox with rice. His wife is beside him.

[facing p. 476]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

Nazir had forgotten or lost the matches entrusted to him, and we could get neither light nor fire. The best part of the time was spent in trying native dodges to obtain a spark, in which D. took an active interest, but the wood was not the right kind, and was, besides, so wet that nothing could be done. Toomhang, the Lepcha, was with us, as he always preferred to be when not actually ordered to keep with and bring up the coolies as he should have done, but we liked gossiping with the fine old man, who was of much too gentle a nature to be a coolie driver. When he told us there would be at least five feet of snow on Tiphu at our last camping ground, by the morning, we knew he was right, and consoled ourselves for all our troubles at the thought of the happy escape we had had."

FLORENCE DONALDSON, 1900.

The roads.

"The *pugdandy* (footpath) now led us up the hill, and the hard climbing we had to do helped to take my thoughts off an experience calculated to unnerve one. In some places we had to scale a projecting rock by means of two pieces of the trunk of a tree with notches at alternate intervals to put one's feet in. This Sikkim style of Jacob's ladder is well enough for the barefooted native, but not at all easy for the leather-shod European. I had looped up my habit skirt before starting, but found it very much in the way all the morning." (But you would probably have found it easier walking in those woollen knickers.)

Ibid.

Sikkim bungalows (old style).

"There were two rooms in the curiously constructed rest-house; the floor and roof being of the same material and as fragile as the walls. We had to take off our boots before we could walk on the yielding floor. Our camp bedsteads would have gone through it, so our bedding was spread on the raised floor which had all the effect of a spring bed,

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

was ever necessary for purposes of defence; but in a country as dry and cold as Tibet, where internal heating is still unknown, they serve the purpose of keeping the occupants of houses warm. This feature, although quite unnecessary in the warmer climate of Sikkim, has been retained in most of the public buildings, but in private houses has given way to walls of bamboo lath and mud plaster, which give all the protection required.

The ordinary Lepcha cottage is generally raised about six feet above ground, and is supported by wooden pillars resting on stones. It is entered by means of a ladder, which usually takes the form of a roughly notched bamboo, the space beneath the house being occupied by the cattle.

The building of houses, like every other Lepcha activity, is hedged around with rules and restrictions. Not all of these are always regarded; but to pretend a complete indifference would be to lay oneself open to the machinations of the ubiquitous evil spirits.

When a man wishes to build a new house he first takes a little earth from the proposed site and gives it to a Lama, who will then divine whether the place is suitable or not. This he does, not by means of meditation, or any other form of concentration, but by referring to a book called *Sachet Zai Patar*. There was only one copy in Lingtem and its owner, when reading it out to us, was honest enough to own that although he had studied the book for years he still found some of the instructions quite incomprehensible. Here is the gist of them:

Jampay Yung, Kongshi Gyabo, Hishay Tugyel, and Shinji Tulgay Gyabo once gathered together in Gyakar, which, so the Hlaribu said, is probably Budh Gaya but may be Benares! But in any case, in Gyakar there are seven burning ghats. These four gods consulted together and they came to the conclusion that since men were building houses all over the place, and without any regard to the suitability of the sites, it was incumbent upon them to formulate some instructions.

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Typical Lepcha homestead.

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Sowing dry rice.

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Re-thatching a house.

[facing p. 172]

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Ongden, a bridegroom of fifty.

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351
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285
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481

Ongden's new wife (in the bottom left-hand corner, wearing a white bodice) arriving at his house for the wedding. Her attendants are just about to enter the house.

[facing p. 258]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

places made of five stones. The third stone in the middle is common to both and is long enough to support a kettle on each of its outer extremities. Since the stones are placed with a view to holding larger kettles little iron tripods with rings are placed between the stones so as to permit the use of little kettles. Wood is used for fuel. About 1 and ½ meter above the fire a bamboo framework shelf is suspended for holding the kitchen utensils, fuel and other articles. The fireplace stretches across the entire width of the house, as it is the chief work-room, dining-room and, at night, the dormitory. In addition to this there are other little rooms shut off by wooden partitions. Some of these have a roof made of bamboo slats. All types of belongings are stored up over this ceiling which can be approached by the help of a tree trunk notched at intervals to serve as stairs. Occasionally one finds an additional partition which serves as an altar on which sacrifices are offered. This is, very likely, a borrowing from Buddhism.

The pig sties are sometimes located under the house, sometimes at the side. Near the house are situated the stables for cattle and goats and the poultry cages, together with other store houses. The entire settlement in some cases is completely enclosed with a bamboo fence.

Individual farmhouses are as a rule all by themselves. But there are also settlements which comprise of two, three or four houses. This kind of dwelling, a kind of building on piles, is characteristic of the Rong, but has its parallels in South-East Asia and South China.

The ancient costume of the Rong consists of two coarse striped widths of cloth which are held in place over the shoulders by means of a clasp, and about the loins with the aid of a cloth girdle. It reaches up to the knees. Both men and women wear trousers which come below the knees. Sometimes the men wear a short shirt, while the women wear a bodice. This was the ancient costume and the material for this was woven by the Lepchas themselves. Today the practice of weaving has almost died out. The Lepchas purchase ready-made materials. In place of the old style the women have taken over the Tibetan style in an ever increasing degree ; the long dress without sleeves (the Tibetan

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

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417

31. Lepcha house with stores

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32. Fenced Lepcha settlement

[End Plate 12]